CHAPTER
4
Hinowa ga CRUSH!
TAKAHIRO
strelka

CHAPTER 4 FIRST BATTLE
Hijnowa ga CRUSH!
STORY: Takahiro
ART: strelka

SWISH
SHA
SHA (SWISH)

LISTEN, TOBARI. YOU SHOULDN'T GO INTO BATTLE.
THE BATTLEFIELD IS A SCARY PLACE.
ONE BIG, UGLY MESS.

BUT YOU FIGHT IN ALL THE BATTLES, DAD.
SHA
THAT'S BECAUSE I'VE GOT NOTHING ELSE GOING FOR ME.
SO SELF DEPRICATING ...
SHA
SHA

FROM NOW ON, I'M GONNA MAKE LIFE EASIER FOR HIM TO PAY HIM BACK!
BUT I'VE GOTTEN AS BIG AS I HAVE THE MONEY THAT MY FATHER EARNED.
HEY, SUZU-MARU.
!

IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR DAD, HE'S NOT HOME.
HE'S AT HIS MISTRESS'S HOUSE.
BROTHER.
BUT I WANTED TO TELL HIM ABOUT MY FIRST BATTLE TODAY...
AWW.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO UPDATE HIM ON EACH AND EVERY LITTLE THING. JUST GO WHEN YOU WANT.
ALL RIGHT, BROTHER.
I'LL TAKE MY LEAVE, THEN.
DAD DOESN'T REALLY CARE ABOUT WHAT YOU'RE UP TO.

YOU'RE SO WEIRD.
EVEN IF YOU'RE HIS BASTARD CHILD, YOU'LL NEVER GO HUNGRY IF YOU JUST STAY HERE.
WHY ARE YOU GOING OUT OF YOUR WAY TO PUT YOURSELF IN JEOPARDY ON THE BATTLE-FIELD?
BECAUSE THERE'S SOME-THING I WANT.
THEN BUY IT.
OR I COULD BUY IT FOR YOU?
IT'S NOT SOMETHING MONEY CAN BUY.
...THAT'S NO WAY FOR A MERCHANT TO TALK.
MONEY CAN GET YOU ANYTHING.

I DON'T CARE IF IT'S DISHONORABLE, JUST COME BACK ALIVE.
DON'T YOU DIE ON ME, HISAME.

LITTLE BRO.
BIG BRO. YOU GUYS SAY SOMETHING TOO.

...YOU GOT IT.

.....

WHY ARE THE MEN IN OUR FAMILY SUCH MUTES!?
ピッ
ピッ
(JAB)
THE GREAT KUME-HACHI-SAMA IS GOING TO WAR.
GO AND GET YOURSELF KILLED FOR ALL I CARE!
YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE DREAMS.
THE LAST THING I WANT TO END UP LIKE IS YOU.
YOU LOSE WHAT LITTLE MONEY YOU HAVE MAKING PISS-POOR GAMBLES AND ARE KILLING YOUR BODY WITH CHEAP LIQUOR.
NO WAY IN HELL AM I LEADING A LIFE LIKE THAT!
WHAT!?
YOU REALLY THINK YOU'RE GONNA MAKE IT BIG IN BATTLE AND RISE IN THE WORLD!?
IN YOUR DREAMS!

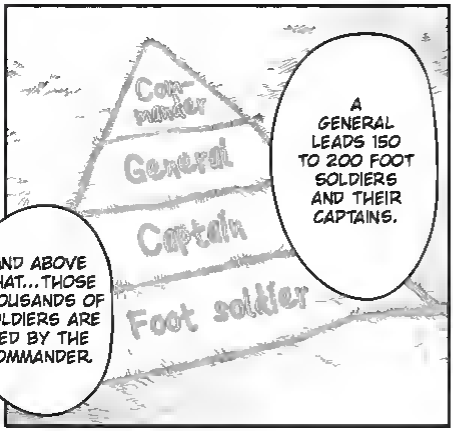
I'LL BECOME THE KIND OF MAN WOMEN THROW THEMSELVES AT!
I'M GOING TO GET EVEN BIGGER!
KUME, YOU BAS-TARD !!

...OUR LIVES...
...ARE ABOUT TO SET SAIL...

YOU SUFFERED SERIOUS INJURIES. BE PATIENT UNTIL YOU'VE FULLY RECOVERED.
THEY'RE EXCITED, BUT THAT'S PROBABLY ONLY BECAUSE THEY DON'T REALIZE THE HORRORS OF WAR.
SU CSWF?
YOU LOOK LIKE YOU WISH TO FOLLOW HINOWA AND HER FRIENDS ... AKAME. ...

I HOPE THEY SUCCEED IN DISTINGUISHING THEMSELVES OUT THERE.
THIS IS BY NO MEANS THEIR FIRST EXPERIENCE WITH WAR.
BESIDES, THOSE KIDS HAVE KILLED PIRATES BEFORE.

ACCORDING TO THE LAWS OF THE SOUKAI NATION, THE AVERAGE SOLDIER IS CALLED A FOOT SOLDIER.


Com-mander
General
Captain
Foot soldier
A GENERAL LEADS 150 TO 200 FOOT SOLDIERS AND THEIR CAPTAINS.
AND ABOVE THAT...THOSE THOUSANDS OF SOLDIERS ARE LED BY THE COMMANDER.

GROUPS OF FOOT SOLDIERS IN THREES OR FOURS ARE BOUND TOGETHER BY A CAPTAIN.
THAT WAS HINOWA'S MOTHER'S RANK.

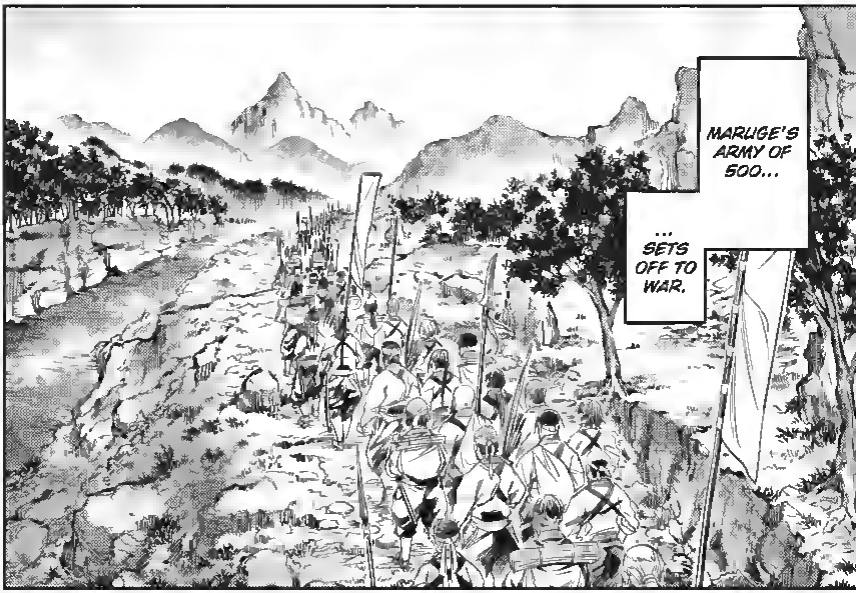
AND THE LAST IS COMMANDER.
BUT ACHIEVING THE TITLE OF COMMANDER BY ORTHODOX METHODS...
...REQUIRES A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF MERITORIOUS ACHIEVEMENT.

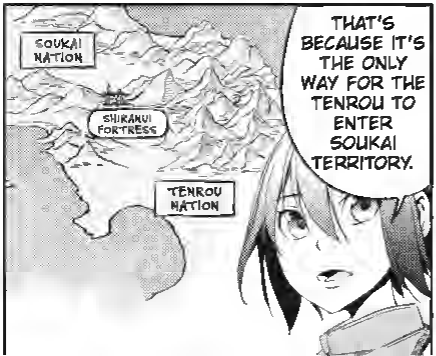
SO THE FIRST RANK TO AIM FOR IS CAPTAIN...
OF COURSE ...
...THOSE NUMBERS ARE ONLY ROUGH ESTIMATES.

IF THEY ARE A BAD EGG, IT WILL BRING HARDSHIP.
IT'S IMPORTANT WHICH COMMANDER YOU HAVE.
...AND LASTLY, YOU NEED LUCK.
...WHY CERTAIN PEOPLE RISE TO SUCH POSITIONS OF POWER.
...ANYWHERE YOU GO, YOU WILL FIND MANY WHO QUESTION ...
THE SOUKAI NATION IS A GOOD COUNTRY, BUT...
...HINOWA.

MY MOTTO IS "LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP."
THE TENROU NATION IS A BUNCH OF WILD, UNRULY DOGS...WHICH WE WILL CALMLY PACIFY.
SOUKAI NATIONAL COMMANDER
MARUGE
MY NAME IS MARUGE.
YOU SHOULD BE HONORED TO HAVE BEEN ENLISTED IN MY UNIT.
I BET HE BECOMES A MONSTER ON THE BATTLEFIELD.
HEY.
THIS COMMANDER STRIKES ME AS AWFULLY MEEK.
MARUGE-SAMA.
I'M GOING TO DISTINGUISH MYSELF IN SERVICE UNDER THIS MAN...!

THE BATTLE HAS ALREADY BEGUN AT SHIRANUI FORTRESS.
AND NOW WE MARCH...!

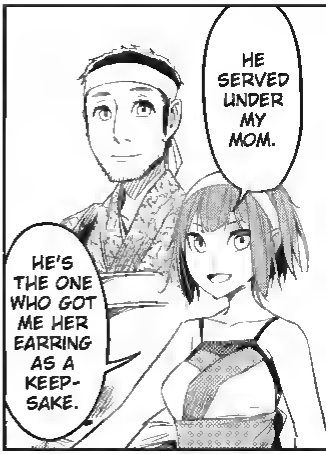

MARUGE'S ARMY OF 500...
... SETS OFF TO WAR.


SOUKAI NATION
SHIRANUI FORTRESS
TENROU NATION
THAT'S BECAUSE IT'S THE ONLY WAY FOR THE TENROU TO ENTER SOUKAI TERRITORY.

SO WE'RE HEADED TO SHIRANUI FORTRESS, ARE WE?

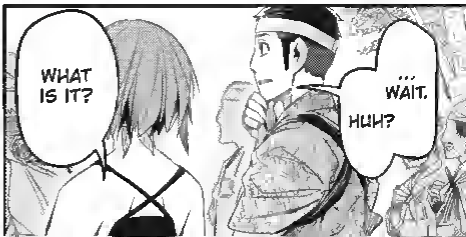
I'D RATHER WE AIMED TO TAKE OUT THE ENEMY'S COMMANDING OFFICER.
!
THAT'S WHY I THINK WE'RE GOING IN TO REPLACE THE DEFENSE UNIT... THAT'S HOW THEY'VE ALWAYS PROTECTED IT IN THE PAST.
THE TENROU ARE PROBABLY PLANNING TO ATTACK UNTIL THE DEFENSES TIRE.
BUT SHIRANUI FORTRESS IS A STRONGHOLD BETWEEN TWO SHEER CLIFF FACES AND UNASSAILABLE BY EVEN A LARGE ARMY.
C...
CAPTAIN HINOWA!?
FUMIO-SAN!!
AH...
YOU'RE NOT THE CAPTAIN JUST HER DAUGHTER ...
HA HA...
WHO'S THIS?

SO YOU'VE JOINED THE WAR TOO, HAVE YOU.
YES!
AND I'VE ALSO ADOPTED MY MOTHER'S NAME— HINOWA.


HE SERVED UNDER MY MOM.
HE'S THE ONE WHO GOT ME HER EARRING AS A KEEP-SAKE.

WE SEEM TO BE STRAYING AWAY FROM SHIRANUI FORTRESS, DON'T YOU THINK?
HUH?

...I...
I SEE.
I WONDER IF SHE'LL BE OKAY... SHE'S STILL SO YOUNG.


WHAT IS IT?
...
WAIT.
HUH?

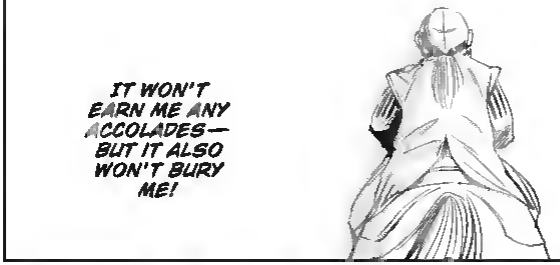
AT THIS BEARING, WE'LL BE HEADED FOR THE MOUNTAIN TO THE EAST OF SHIRANUI FORTRESS...
ALLOW ME TO EXPLAIN.
IT'S THE WISE OLD MAN!
MT. KAGE-BOUSHI.
A MOUN-TAIN!?

LOOKS LIKE EVERYONE'S CAUGHT ON...
SAWA CHIKUMUDO
SAWA
ONE WEEK PRIOR
LORD SHION.
THE ENEMY IS SURE TO AVOID SUCH A PRECARIOUS OBSTACLE.
SOUKAI NATION STRATEGIST
SHION
WHAT I WANT TO OCCUPY IN THIS NEXT FIGHT...
...IS THE MOUNTAIN TO THE EAST OF SHIRANUI FORTRESS— MT. KAGEBOUSHI.
THAT'S ...
HM?

A SURPRISE ATTACK CAN'T BE LAUNCHED FROM SOMEWHERE PREDICT-ABLE.
IF YOU THINK IT UNLIKELY, LORD SHION, AS THE STRATEGIST, THAT MAKES SUCH A TACTIC ALL THE MORE FEARSOME.
SO RATHER THAN THE MOUNTAINS TO THE WEST, YOU WANT TO DEPLOY TO THE STEEPER MOUNTAINS TO THE EAST.
... HMM.
HMMM... I SEE.
IF THEY TARGET ANYTHING, IT WILL BE THE DEFENSE-LESS EAST!
GIVEN THE GENTLE SLOPES OF THE WEST, THEY'RE ALREADY FULL OF TRAPS, AND THE MAJORITY OF THE DEFENSIVE UNIT IS STANDING ON ALERT THERE.
KOOKIN OKONKO

IF THEY ATTACK FROM THE SEA, THEY'LL LOSE AND THEY CANNOT DEFEAT SHIRANUI FORTRESS.
SO WHY ARE THE TENROU ATTACKING AGAIN...
I WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED IF THEIR TACTIC INVOLVED DISPATCHING A DESPERATE UNIT ALONG A SIDE ROUTE...
VERY WELL.
I APPROVE OF YOUR BATTLE FORMATION, LORD MARUGE. IF THE ENEMY COMES, SLAY THEM.
OH, GOOD!
PERFECT. MY BATTLE FORMATION WILL STEER ME WELL CLEAR OF DEATH.
MAN, I AM GOOD.

I MARRIED THE DAUGHTER OF A BIG SHOT WHO NOBODY ELSE WOULD TOUCH...
...AND BY TAKING HER HAND, I RECEIVED THE RANK I NOW HOLD.
AT HOME, I AM PICKED ON BY MY MOTHER-IN-LAW AND WIFE.
BICHA
BICHA (SHIT)
HISO (WHISPER)
BECAUSE WE'RE CHILDLESS, THEY TALK ABOUT ME BEHIND MY BACK, CALLING ME IMPOTENT.
BUTSU (MUTTER)
I TRADED THAT HELL FOR THIS POSITION AS COMMANDER... SO I'M NOT ABOUT TO GO GETTING MYSELF KILLED NOW.
BURU (TREMBLE)
BURU
BUTSU
BUTSU
I'M GOING TO LIVE A LONG LIFE, AND AFTER MY WIFE DIES, I'LL SURROUND MYSELF WITH MISTRESSES!
THREE—NO, FOUR OF THEM!
KA (FLASH)


IT WON'T EARN ME ANY ACCOLADES— BUT IT ALSO WON'T BURY ME!
THAT'S WHY I CHOSE THE LEAST DANGEROUS PLACE TO FIGHT.

THE BATTLE FOR US IS SIMPLY CLIMBING THIS MOUNTAIN...
I... I CAN'T BELIEVE WE'RE FORMING UP IN THIS TREACHEROUS PLACE.

WE'RE GETTING WORN OUT AND THE FIGHT HASN'T EVEN STARTED.

THE ELDER AND AKAME SAID TO NEVER BE OFF YOUR GUARD ONCE IN BATTLE.
YOU'RE RIGHT... SORRY.
WE MUST'VE GOTTEN THE LOSING LOTTERY TICKET.
EH, HINO-WA?
THE ENEMY WON'T COME HERE.
AFTER ALL, THE TENROU NATION CAN'T SECURE A FOOD SUPPLY FROM HOME.
NOW WE CAN JUST ENJOY SOME REST AND RELAXATION UNTIL THIS FIGHT IS OVER.
MARUGE-SAMA-AAA!

A SNEAK ATTACK !!
THE ENEMY IS MAKING A SNEAK ATTACK!!
WHAT !?
DO (WHAM)
HYA HAAA !!
...UWA-WAH!
PARA (FLAKE)
PARA
?

ENEMY ATTA-AACK!!
ENEMY ATTACK!!
UWAAH!
HEH. HEH. OUT OF WATER, YOU'RE NOTHING BUT SMALL FRIES, YOU PATHETIC SOUKAI SOLDIERS.
KUH!
OH? YOU WANT TO TAKE US ON RIGHT HERE ON THE MOUNTAIN? THEN I WON'T HOLD BACK...
...KILLING YOU—
ZU (SLASH)

ZA
ZA
(SLASH)

AAAH...
AH...
ARE YOU OKAY, FUMIO-SAN?
HUH!?
WELCOME BACK, CAPTAIN HINOWA!!

SO THAT'S WHAT YOU MEANT.
SO YOUNG AND ALREADY SO IMPRES-SIVE!
!
YOU'RE THE SPITTING IMAGE OF YOUR MOTHER ...
HEARING YOU SAY I'M THE SPITTING IMAGE OF MY MOTHER...
...SUDDENLY MAKES MY STRENGTH SOAR!!

OOOOOOOO (WOARR)
KEEP GOING.
IF THERE'S A DEFENSIVE UNIT THERE, ANNIHILATE THEM.
TENROU NATION COMMANDER
YOMIHIME
TO BE CONTINUED IN THE NEXT CHAPTER...!

Hinowa ga CRUSH!
Chapter 4

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First Yen Press eBook Edition: September 2017

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ISBN: 978-1-975-30002-9 (ebook)